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Beck, Martin
Martin Beck offers Madame Sarah Bernhardt in vaudeville

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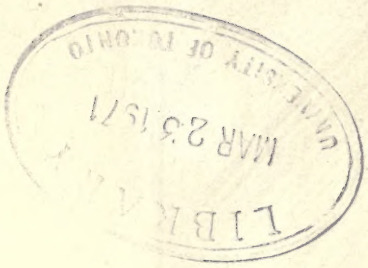
Martin Beck
offers
Madame Sarah Bernhardt
in
Vaudeville

With Her Own Company
from the Theatre
Sarah Bernhardt, Paris
in an Act from these Plays
from Her Repertoire

UNE NUIT DE NOEL
LA DAME AUX CAMELIAS
LA TOSCA
THEODORA
LUCRÈCE BORGIA
PHÈDRE



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Sarah Bernhardt

¶ "There are five kinds of actresses," said Mark Twain; "bad actresses, fair actresses, good actresses, great actresses, and Sarah Bernhardt."

¶ The supreme histrionic genius of whom this remark was made, perhaps the last of the artistic giants of the theatre, did not begin her career spectacularly, nor with conspicuous promise. Unlike Shakespeare's grandiloquent Glendower, at her birth "the frame and huge foundation of the earth" did not shake "like a coward."

¶ Sarah Bernhardt was born into a modest family in Paris, October 22, 1844, so that this remarkable woman, as much in her prime now as in the days of her first triumphs at the Theatre Français, has reached the age of sixty-eight. Her mother, a native of Holland, was sixteen when the child made her début upon "this greater stage men call the world." The girl was sent to be educated in a convent at Versailles, arrived at young womanhood wanting to be a nun, and with difficulty was persuaded to enter that foremost of all schools of acting, the Paris Conservatoire.

¶ The girl's doubts of her vocation seemed justified when, on September 1, 1862, she made her first appearance at the Theatre Français as Iphigenie in the tragedy by Racine. Sarcey, the great French critic, called her "insignificant," and her resignation, a year or two later, created little stir. Mme. Bernhardt resolved to quit the stage then, and went to Spain,

but subsequently played at the Gymnase, the Porte St. Martin, and the Odeon, where her first success of importance was achieved in "Athalie." She returned to the Theatre Français acknowledged a great actress, and this acknowledgment grew to be acclaim in 1879, when the "Divine Sarah" became the rage in London.

¶ The following year she came to America, making her bow to a New York audience November 8, 1880, in the rôle of Adrienne Lecouvreur. Her triumph was immediate. Twenty-seven performances were given in New York, to average receipts of 20,342 francs—something over four thousand dollars. Our critics unanimously concluded that here was the greatest tragedienne of her time—perhaps of all time. That conclusion has remained during thirty years, in the course of which period Mme. Bernhardt has made six tours of the United States, the forthcoming tour in vaudeville being her seventh.

¶ The "Divine Sarah" to-day is something more than the finest of tragediennes; she is a human monument to the art of acting, a connecting link with the heroic days of dramatic poetry, of Dumas, and Sardou, and Victor Hugo. Her acting remains the standard of merit in fifty classic parts; she has illuminated the great work of the greatest Frenchmen—from Racine to Rostand, from Sardou to Bisson. Not to have seen Sarah Bernhardt is to have missed the most important chapter in the histrionic history of our age.

Mme. Bernhardt in Vaudeville

¶ Vaudeville has become accustomed to great names. A glance backward over its record shows that many of the most earnest artistic workers have associated themselves with its progress and present dignified attainments.

¶ Notwithstanding the fact that the greatest contemporary authors, artists and impresarios had given their very best service to this younger child of the stage, the announcement that Martin Beck would present the world's greatest actress, Madame Sarah Bernhardt, in vaudeville brought first an echo of universal surprise and then a flood of appreciation.

¶ To know Martin Beck is to understand his bringing the "Divine Sarah" to America under his direction. He has striven continuously and indefatigably to place vaudeville at its present high standard—to cause its accomplishments to parallel the achievements of the most notable epoch of the drama. Through the conquest of seemingly unconquerable difficulties Mr. Beck has arrived at the crowning success of a career filled with achievements.

¶ Mr. Beck it was who induced David Belasco to stage two one-act dramas—remarkable dramas, too—for the benefit of the Orpheum Circuit. Mr. Beck it was who succeeded in presenting Ethel Barrymore, and a dozen other world celebrities, in the "two a day."

¶ Sarah Bernhardt, however, if any vaudeville manager had had the temerity to think of her at all, would have been considered an impossibility. As well attempt tempting Paderewski to compose ragtime, or persuade Rodin to model "sand statuary" in Atlantic City.

¶ Mr. Beck *did* think of Bernhardt, and with him to think was to act. Nearly a year ago, without hinting at his plan to his closest associates, he slipped away to Paris, and returned with the dreamed-of contract with the "Divine Sarah." He had convinced her that to appear at moderate prices, thus affording the opportunity of presenting her to the vast multitude of play-lovers with whom, on account of the fees charged for her other performances here, Bernhardt had been but a glorious name, was a duty she owed to the public. An accomplishment meriting great praise.

To Sarah Bernhardt

The art of acting is a vagrant art;
Its triumphs writ in water on the sands of time—
A perfect product of the brain and heart,
So quick disclosed, and so soon forgot,
As to be like the chanting of a rhyme
Into deaf ears that hear it not.

But you, O Lady of the Golden Voice,
Whose liquid magic paints all shades of joy and pain—
Whose slightest smile bids ev'ry man rejoice,
Within whose tears a thousand woes are pent,
Will live this æon through, and live again—
Your perfect art its perfect monument.

MADAME BERNHARDT
IN
UNE NUIT DE NOEL

"Une Nuit de Noel"

Sous la Terreur

(A Christmas Night Under the Terror)

BY HENRI CAIN AND MAURICE BERNHARDT

OUTLINE OF THE PLAY

¶ Henri Cain and Maurice Bernhardt have placed the action of their play in the year 1793, during the French Revolution.

¶ Only one province dared to lift its head to revolt—the province of La Vendée, where mutilated royalty had found a last refuge. The Chouans upheld the cause of the exiled princes and waged a life-and-death struggle against the Revolutionary Armies.

¶ It was a grim warfare, with equal heroism shown on the side of the Chouans (so called because they used the hoot of the owl as their rallying signal) and on the side of the Blues, or regular soldiers, in the Revolutionary Army.

¶ It is Christmas night on a Vendean farm. The Chouans, under Comte de Kersant, have been defeated. The comtesse and her daughter, disguised as peasants, take refuge in the farm-house. Shortly thereafter the Republican Army come trooping in and make this place part of their quarters. With the Blue Army is Marion, the Vivandière. She is a former actress who has been carried away by the impetus of the revo-

La Vivandière . . . Mme. Sarah Bernhardt
Le Comte . . . M. [illegible]
Le Commandant . . . M. [illegible]
Malek . . . M. [illegible]
La Balafre . . . M. [illegible]
La Comtesse . . . Mlle. [illegible]
Yolette . . . Mme. [illegible]

One-act Play.

lution, and with her merry, witty way has come to be adored by the battalion.

¶ Marion soon sees the aristocrat through the disguise of the Comtesse de Kersant. She sends for La Balafre, a veteran sergeant, but feeling sorry for the unfortunate mother and child, despatches the officer; then the comtesse divulges her real identity to Marion. Suddenly the Comte de Kersant knocks at the door. He does not know the farm is in possession of the Blues. With a price on his head he has braved all risk to see his daughter on Christmas night. Marion receives and hides the comte just as he is about to fall into the hands of La Balafre. He confesses to her who he is and openly defends his cause. Marion is won over by his heroism, so decides to save him.

¶ Commandant Renaud appears. Seeming to know the comte is in the farmhouse, he suspects Marion of his concealment and threatens her. She resists him until the Comte de Kersant at length gives himself up.

¶ Then Marion, with a marvelous revulsion of feeling, in a superb outburst of indignation cries shame on her comrades. She implores her old companions not to stoop to the dishonorable office of the executioner.

¶ The soldiers are carried away by Marion's generous ardor and enthusiasm, and amid a scene of emotion the Comte de Kersant is allowed to escape, and Marion carries off the comtesse and her little daughter, and the play ends in a superb burst of kindliness, grandeur and heroism.

"Lucrèce Borgia"

BY VICTOR HUGO

OUTLINE OF THE PLAY

¶ A room in the ducal palace at Ferrara is the scene of the third act in "Lucrèce Borgia," by Victor Hugo. Alphonse D'Este, the Duke of Ferrara, has just arrested Gennaro for defacing, in a fit of youthful folly, the front of the palace. The duke's real interest in the young man is a belief that Gennaro is a lover of Lucrèce Borgia, the Duchess of Ferrara. The truth is that Gennaro is the illegitimate son of Lucrèce.

¶ In a flaming passion Lucrèce enters and demands the life of the culprit who has defaced her name above the portico of the palace. Calmly the duke informs her that the man has already been arrested and makes an oath to her that the life she demands will be taken. The door opens and Gennaro is brought in a prisoner.

¶ Insolently he admits his guilt, while Lucrèce dares not tell the duke her true relationship, seeking every subterfuge to prove Gennaro guiltless. Then in a half-sly, half-menacing manner Ferrara shows Lucrèce that he believes Gennaro to be her lover. And Lucrèce Borgia, a hardened and ruthless woman, shivers at the thought of her son's peril. But again she tries to save him: "A private word with you, my

Lucrèce Borgia....Mme. Sarah Bernhardt
(Duchess of Ferrara)
Alphonse D'Este.....M. Lou Tellegen
Gennaro.....M. Terestri
Rustighello.....M. Deneubourg
Bautista.....M. Favlères

Act III.

A SCENE
FROM
LUCRÈCE BORGIA

lord," she asks, and the guards withdraw their prisoner. Lucrèce pleads passionately before the sardonically calm Ferrara, who refuses to break his oath. The duke is adamant until she asks his reason for refusal. "Because this Captain Gennaro is your lover, madam!" he cries. Lucrèce is dumbfounded, unable to tell the truth, and D'Este reads her the life story of the Borgias—of her fratricide brother Cæsar; her father the Pope, a scandal to Rome, with his shameless courtesans, and, lastly, of her mother, the notorious Rosa Neozza, and her offense to the Christian world. Realizing the utter uselessness of entreating, she reverts to the true character of a Borgia by threats. Ferrara takes advantage of the situation to wreak the secret vengeance that had been in his heart for months and calls on her to choose the manner of Gennaro's death. Moaning, she avoids the choice, and Gennaro is once more brought in. D'Este orders wine, previously poisoned for just such an occasion, brought, and with a veiled threat prompts her to pour it into a cup, which is then drained by Gennaro. His purpose being accomplished, he leaves them with soft words of mock courtesy.

¶ Instantly Lucrèce informs Gennaro of the poison and gives him a phial containing a powerful antidote. This Gennaro believes to be a trick and refuses the second draught. He turns and overwhelms her with pitiless contempt. Her mother love is stronger than her cruel soul, and in agonized and passionate eloquence she prevails on him to drink and orders him to ride swiftly out of Venice.

MADAME BERNHARDT
IN
THEODORA

"Théodora"

BY VICTORIEN SARDOU

OUTLINE OF THE PLAY

¶ Few rôles contain such a range of emotion as Victorien Sardou's tragedy "Théodora."

¶ Zoe, a circus girl, contracts marriage with Justicien, Emperor of Byzantine. As the Empress Théodora her iron will dominates her cowardly consort and rapidly forces her recognition as the ruling spirit of the empire.

¶ The old vagabond instinct of Zoe survives in Théodora and continually breaks out afresh. During such spells Théodora revisits the crony of her youth, one Tamyris, an Egyptian fortune teller. Here she begs from the sorceress a magic love potion. Meanwhile Théodora-Zoe's rambles have thrown her across the path of one Andreas, a young Greek. He, believing her to be Myrtha, a young widow—conceives a violent passion for her.

¶ She returns this love, which is the first pure affection of her life.

¶ Andreas is the head of a band of conspirators in league with the faction planning to overthrow Justicien and Théodora.

¶ Returning to the palace, Théodora finds Justicien in a fury of jealousy at her mysterious nightly wanderings. They quarrel violently. She declares the very nocturnal rambles of which he complains have set her upon the track of a ripening conspiracy.

L'Imperatrice Théodora....Mme. Sarah Bernhardt
L'Empereur Justicien.....M. Lou Tellegen
Antonine.....Mlle. Seylor
Marcellus.....M. Deneubourg
Belisaire.....M. Favières
Eudemon.....M. Terestri

Act III.

¶ One of the conspirators—Marcellus—comes to the door. He is seized and pinioned, but his cry for help to his comrade Andreas for the first time reveals to Théodora her lover's complicity in the plot. Marcellus is ordered put to the torture, under which he will surely reveal the name of his accomplice.

¶ "What is to be done?" she asks.

¶ "Only one thing," Marcellus whispers. "That gold bodkin in your hair—strike it in my heart."

¶ She hesitates, but as the prisoner shouts the name of Andreas Théodora drives the pin home. "He insulted me and I stabbed him!" she cries as the retainers rush forward.

¶ The scene changes to the games at the circus. Andreas, who by this time has discovered that his beloved Myrtha is the hated Théodora, rushes up to her and denounces her and in the confusion escapes. From the sorceress Théodora learns he is lying wounded in one of the vaults under the circus. Thither she repairs to seek her lover's forgiveness, but he only hurls curses at her and shrinks from the contamination of her touch.

¶ Suddenly she thinks of the love potion obtained from Tamyris. She forces Andreas to drink it; no sooner has he done so than he falls back dead. Tamyris, thinking that the potion was intended for Justicien, substituted a deadly poison.

¶ As the broken-hearted Théodora throws herself on her lover's body the executioner, sent by her jealous husband, appears.

"La Dame aux Camelias"

BY ALEXANDRE DUMAS (THE YOUNGER)

OUTLINE OF THE PLAY

¶ The tragic romance of Marguerite Gautier, known as "La Dame aux Camelias," because of her penchant for that flower, was written by Alexandre Dumas (the younger) in 1852 and dramatized later. Marguerite, a fashionable courtesan, had passed some months in the Pyrénées in the hope of regaining her health, and it was there that the love which ultimately became all-absorbing for both first sprang up in the breast of Armand Duval.

¶ From that moment Marguerite was metamorphosed. A profound love burned within her breast and stirred her soul to its very depths. All her old gayeties were put aside. Her horses, her carriages and her diamonds were in turn sold or sacrificed to provide the means for the lovers to realize their dream of happiness. The woman is thus regenerated by love, but when their happiness seems to be highest Duval's father appears. Armand himself was absent, having gone to Paris for the purpose of raising money.

¶ His father demands that she must give up Armand. Marguerite combats this with all her strength. Having sold all her valuables, and entertaining no suspicion that Armand will assign his mother's fortune to her, she therefore assures the father, who appears afraid of this intention on the part of his son, that she has received

Marguerite Gautier....Mme. Sarah Bernhardt
Armand Duval.....M. Lou Tellegen
Gaston Rieux.....M. Deneubourg
Docteur.....M. Favières
Gustave.....M. Terestri
Nanine.....Mlle. Seylor
Prudence.....Mme. Boulanger
Nichette.....Mlle. Duc

Act V.

MADAME BERNHARDT
AS
CAMILLE

no money from Armand and will never take one farthing. The father now recognizes the innate goodness of heart of Marguerite, and advances the argument that Armand's sister is on the point of entering a highly respected family and that the union of Marguerite and Armand would shatter the sister's life happiness and the happiness of the family. Marguerite therefore sacrifices herself and agrees to part with Armand.

¶ She thinks, moreover, of a means to bring this about. She leaves the house before the return of Armand and sends him a letter saying she has gone off with another man. She maintains this lie even when she meets him afterward at the house of a friend and is grossly insulted by Armand, who throws bank notes at her.

¶ The violent excitement throws Marguerite on a sick bed. Already consumptive, she feels herself near to death, and cherishes only one wish—to see Armand before she dies.

¶ The elder Duval, touched by Marguerite's heroic magnanimity, at last tells Armand the truth. Armand rushes to his beloved one and Marguerite is made happy once more. But she is not able to bear this new excitement, and dies in her lover's arms.

¶ The heroine of this drama is no fictitious personage. The Marguerite Gautier of the play is a counterpart of the renowned beauty, Maria Duplessis, who from 1845 to 1847 wielded the sceptre of Paris in what is called "Le Monde Galant." The portrait drawn of her at the time describes her as a woman of marked grace and distinction.

MADAME BERNHARDT
IN
PHÈDRE

"Phèdre"

BY JEAN RACINE

OUTLINE OF THE PLAY

¶ Racine's five-act tragedy "Phèdre" deals with the happenings in the household of the Athenian king, Theseus.

¶ At the opening of the play the king is absent from his throne. His son Hippolytus, it develops, fears his foster-mother, Phèdre, but loves the fair Aricia, despite his father's commands.

¶ The unhappy Phèdre relates to her confidant, Œnone, her all-empowering love for Hippolytus. The unholy love has torn at her heart and disordered her mind, and she dares pray to none but the God of Death. News comes of the death of Theseus and, in view of this intelligence, the queen accepts the advice of Œnone to live and love, that Hippolytus might father her infant son.

¶ In the second act Hippolytus avows his love to Aricia, promising to free her from her bondage.

¶ Phèdre tells her love to Hippolytus. He stands aghast. To expiate her crime she implores him to strike his sword to her heart, "or in default of thy arm, lend me thy sword." With it she flees from him, as a messenger announces that the son of Phèdre has been acclaimed the choice of all the tribes to succeed Theseus.

¶ Unmindful of her son's honors Phèdre is desolate, and lives only in the forlorn hope that she may yet melt the cruel pride of Hippolytus. She sends Œnone to him with a message, but she returned with news that the king, whom all thought dead, had returned from his journey. Phèdre, in her perplexity, abandons her fate to Œnone.

¶ The king asks of his son the cause of his strange welcome. The answer comes that none but Phèdre will tell.

¶ Œnone tells the king of a "criminal love his son has borne toward Phèdre." In his fury the king orders Hippolytus into exile. Phèdre is filled with remorse and upbraids herself for not having accepted the blame. When Œnone tells her that it was she who accused Hippolytus and announces his love for Aricia, Phèdre turns on her and in a frenzy blames her for all the sorrow. She it was who bade tell her love and bids her "Go."

¶ Theseus, whose love for his son is only overshadowed by the outrage done his household, calls Œnone to prove her charges, but a messenger brings news of her death in the sea. Theseus repents his hasty judgment and orders Hippolytus before him that he may offer his defense, praying to Neptune to hasten not his sinister gifts; but it is too late—Hippolytus is no more. Then to Phèdre Theseus declares: "I believe him criminal since you accuse him." The queen restores Hippolytus to his innocence as the venom of a poison reaches her heart.

"La Tosca"

BY VICTORIEN SARDOU

OUTLINE OF THE PLAY

¶ In writing "La Tosca" Victorien Sardou combines the dramatic advantages of the jealous yet loyal love of a woman with that historical period so rich in literary and theatrical possibilities—the Bonapartean era.

¶ At the height of her success Flora La Tosca, the foremost prima donna of her day in Italy, contracted an affectionate alliance with Mario Cavardossi, a Roman tinged with the liberal opinions of Rousseau and Voltaire; consequently he was looked upon with suspicion.

¶ To discount the decidedly dangerous opinion of him, Mario offered to paint the frescoes of the Church of St. Andrew. He is interrupted at this work by Cæsar Angelotti, an escaped Republican prisoner. Mario, really a Liberal, commits treason by assisting Angelotti to freedom.

¶ The escape has caused Baron Scarpia to be held in distrust. A bright thought strikes him, and he enters into conversation with La Tosca, hopeful of exciting her jealousy, thus inducing her to betray her lover, Mario, and through him Angelotti. This he succeeds in doing by means of a fan which bears the coronet of the Marchioness Attavanti. La Tosca, infuriated, flies to Frascati, to confront the guilty pair. She is followed by the baron

MADAME BERNHARDT
IN THE FOURTH ACT
OF
LA TOSCA

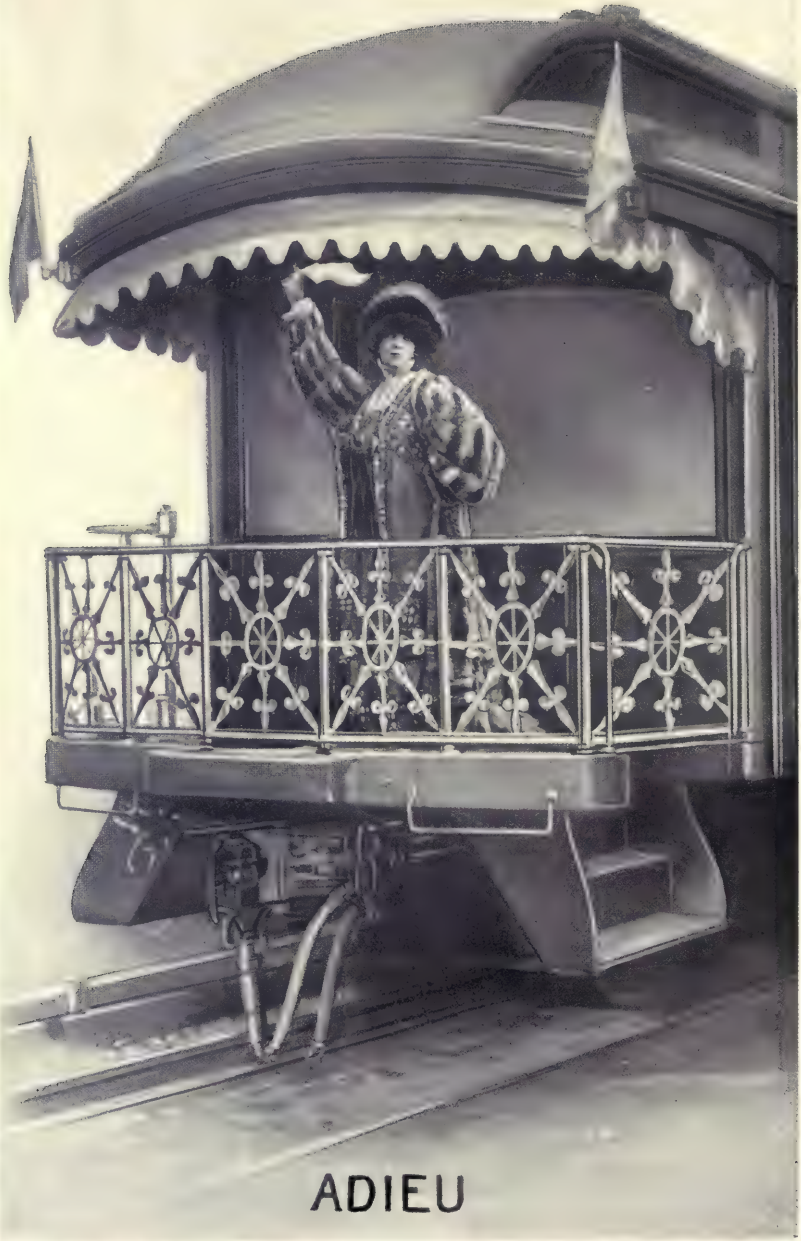
to the villa where Mario and Angelotti are in hiding. Upon her arrival Flora recognizes that her fury has betrayed both Angelotti and Mario; they get Angelotti into a secret well just as Scarpia comes upon the scene. Unable to find his man, he orders Mario put to torture. Frantic at her lover's dreadful plight, La Tosca breaks her vow to Mario and turns Angelotti over to meet his death; but it is of little avail. As the body of the loyal Liberal is brought in upon a bier Scarpia coldly orders both prisoners taken away—one to the grave, the other to the scaffold.

¶ In the fourth act Scarpia orders La Tosca before him that she might gaze, through a castle window, at the gallows, where presently will be shown to the world the dead Angelotti and the living Cavardossi. He then makes her an odious proposition, offering the life of her lover in exchange for her fidelity to him. After a long struggle La Tosca consents. She further insists upon being given a "safe conduct." As the brief is signed she stealthily stabs Scarpia in the back. Seizing the paper from the dead man's stiffening fingers, La Tosca rushes from the room to save her lover.

¶ The play ends after the execution of Mario. Maddened with grief, she cries out: "Go and see what I have done to this monster, whose very corpse can murder!"

¶ When the soldiers return and report that Baron Scarpia was murdered La Tosca springs to the window ledge and, dropping into the void, goes willingly to join her lover.

MADAME BERNHARDT
IN
VARIOUS CHARACTERS



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